

Middlebury Friends Meeting

March
2011



MARCH 2011

| SUN | MON | TUES | WED | THURS | FRI | SAT |
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| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | |

QUAKER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Every Saturday 10:30 AM Vigil for Peace on the Triangle Green, downtown Middlebury. Until 11 AM.
- Sat/Sun. Mar. 5 & 6 Quarterly Meeting at Hanover Mtg. in Hanover, NH
- Sun. Mar 6 8:30 AM Friendly Forum, Mysticism, Part 2, with Tom Baskett, at Havurah House
- Mon. Mar 7 7:00 PM Women's Group at Sophia Hughes, 434/977-5123
- Wed. Mar. 9 7:00 PM Men's Group at Chris Stackhouse's, 388-9224
- Sun. Mar. 13 10:00 PM Intergenerational Meeting at Havurah followed by enhanced hospitality (finger foods) Friends of all ages encouraged to attend.
- Mon. Mar. 14 4:30 PM Committee on Outreach and Social Action meeting at Dickinson's, 388-2594
- Sun. Mar. 20 8:30 AM Worship and Study Committee meeting Havurah House
- Sun. Mar. 20 11:30 AM Monthly Meeting for Business
- Fri. Apr. 1 6:00 PM April Fools Day potluck, location TBA

“Prayer is not an old woman’s idle amusement.
Properly understood and applied, it is
the most potent instrument of action.”

— MOHANDAS GANDHI

Middlebury Friends Meeting Monthly Meeting for Business

20 February, 2011

Acting Clerk: Tom Baskett

Recording Clerk: Priscilla Baker

Present were Laura Asermily, Win Colwell, Tom Dickinson and Wendy Goodwin.

11.02.01 Minutes from 16 January 2011 were accepted as printed in the newsletter.

11.02.02 Treasurer’s Report (from Laura Asermily & Jill Stackhouse): “Our cash balance at the end of December 2010 was \$5161.40. During the month of Jan. 2011 the Meeting had an income of \$565.25. The income for the comparable period last year was \$681.00. Total income for the fiscal year 2011 through Jan. is \$7856.25, which is \$2464.25 ahead of this same period last year. Expenditures during Jan. totaled \$3231.31: Rent \$500, NEYM \$499, NW Quarterly MTG. \$250, as well as Shareheat \$1000, Friends Camp China Maine \$600, and Peace & Justice \$200. The bank balance at the end of Jan. was \$2495.34, which includes \$1,602.80 in the carry-over surplus fund.

“The finance committee met in January to discuss the best way to deal with the numerous incoming requests for donations. It became clear that we needed to develop some sort of criteria for considering them. We fairly quickly came up with an outline of the most important points to for consideration. After doing that exercise it was decided that some of the requests did not meet the criteria and or that most should wait should wait until our yearly budget meeting for consideration as they were not of dire need. Given those decisions it was then decided that beyond the funds for Shareheat and Peace & Justice that we should go ahead and fully fund the Friends China Maine Camp as that request was an emergency need.”

11.02.03 Worship and Study Committee (W & S) (report from Tom Baskett and Chris Stackhouse, edited for these minutes by the recording clerk)

1. *The State of the Meeting discussion and report* were reviewed. The report will be presented at monthly meeting. (See item #7 below.)
2. *More copies of the "Practices" booklet will be made.*
3. *Friendly Forums*: The next one will be *Mysticism, Part 2*, on March 6, facilitated by Tom Baskett. Future topics were discussed.
4. *Living a Life of Prayer retreat*, led by Mary Kay Glazer on February 5, 2011, was attended by 11 Friends. Tom Baskett reported that it was a wonderful, slow, healing and balancing experience. He expressed a desire for more of these retreats.
5. *UU curriculum for young people/Popcorn Theology*: W & S will begin to contact young Friends to discuss participation in this program.
6. *Monthly Queries*: It was suggested we find some new or alternative queries for future reading on monthly meeting Sundays. Marg Collins will continue to invite a reader each month.

FOLLOW-UP: Celebration of Life: This year's celebration falls on May 8. Some feel this is too early in Spring for warm-enough weather to hold our celebration outside. It was suggested we shift to a Sunday between Mother's Day and Father's Day. June 5 was suggested and will be further discussed by W & S Committee.

11.02.04 Pastoral Care Committee (PCC) (from Priscilla Baker): As suggested at the State of the Meeting discussion in January, PCC will now consider the needs of elders in MFM at all monthly PCC meetings.

11.02.05 Fellowship Committee (FC) (from Wendy Goodwin, edited for these minutes by the recording clerk)

1. *Feb 25 dessert potluck at Faith's home*: a Sugar on Snow party and Games Night.
2. *April 1 potluck*: The topic will be to tell a funny story about April Fool's Day - or any other time when you were fooled. We are in need of someone to volunteer their home.
3. *Potluck locations*: There are a limited number of homes large enough to accommodate MFM potlucks. We worry that we depend too much on these folks. FC will explore this issue and welcome thoughts & suggestions about this from all Friends.
4. *All new Friendly 8 groups* have convened for their first time.
5. At the next FC meeting *summer plans* will be discussed - any ideas are welcome.

11.02.06 Outreach and Social Action Committee (COSA) (from Tom Dickinson, edited for these minutes by the recording clerk, with FOLLOW UP action by MM noted after each item.)

1. *The Addison Independent annual church insert* will come out soon. Some revisions to the wording of the MFM ad from last year were made.

FOLLOW UP: A little more tweaking was suggested. COSA will submit our ad to the paper.

2. In the current Nor'Wester, the QM clerk has several requests of monthly meetings:

- A. "That each meeting reaffirm its minute or formally minute its disunity with the FUM personnel policy ... " FOLLOW UP: At monthly meeting for business on January 16, 2011, Middlebury Friends Meeting considered the draft minute on FUM policies and approved the minute with no change in wording. The title was changed to reflect the approval: "Minute from Middlebury on Friends United Meeting Personnel Policy, January 2011." The text is the same as published online by NWQM in Jan. 2011 as part of "Summary of Minutes and Comments with regard to the FUM Personnel Policy". The introduction is also the same, with the title changed to "Introduction to Minute from Middlebury, January, 2011".
- B. "That each meeting consider if a program on Sexual Ethics would be a good use of our program time in June." FOLLOW UP: At this monthly meeting we considered our participation in a discussion on sexual ethics. We agreed that this is an important and difficult issue. We ask that COSA seek information on the subject to help us decide whether to hold a full meeting discussion. As a side-note: all present at this monthly meeting agreed that the issue of FUM policies is a matter of civil and spiritual rights and not of sexual ethics.
- C. "That each meeting consider if it is in unity with the Wilderness minute on the mistreatment of and discrimination against Muslims." FOLLOW UP: After discussion we came to agreement about the spirit of the minute. This has not been widely discussed in our Meeting and we believe this consideration should take place before we declare our unity as a Meeting with the minute. It was suggested that the minute could convey a more powerful message if the examples of abuse were omitted. We felt that these examples dilute and distract from the message of the overall minute
- D. "That YAF Friends and attenders be encouraged to engage with us in the discussion around sexual ethics ... " FOLLOW UP: We agreed that it is desirable to have input from more MFM Friends than were present at monthly meeting today. (see item B above)

3. Witness for Peace, September 11, 2011: Karen Nawn-Fahey suggests we explore holding an all-day silent worship in a place where members of the wider community could drop in to share in a quest for non-violent ways to respond to acts of violence and destruction.

FOLLOW UP: Interest in this suggestion was expressed and COSA encouraged to pursue further.

11.02.07 **The 2011 State of the Meeting report** was read by Win Colwell. Several suggestions were made and will be incorporated. The report will be published in the newsletter for all MFM Friends to read and approve at next monthly meeting.

Monthly meeting closed after a moment of silence.

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING
STATE OF THE MEETING REPORT 2010
DRAFT REPORT

At the close of 2010 Middlebury Friends are grateful that through our connection with each other we have been able to touch the deeper ground of the Spirit. We have felt a deep sense of renewal born of stillness and a faith in the Quaker process of deep listening and attention to the subtle leadings of the spirit.

Our numbers have grown, largely through increased participation of college students who have enriched our worship and social activities. The second Sunday First Day program is successfully building a core of young children coming to Meeting and encouraging greater attendance of their parents. We cherish the small number of Young Friends who attend regularly, and we are grateful for our elders who share their grounded wisdom.

We spent a lot of time seeking an appropriate response to the personal policies of Friends United Meeting, practices we perceive as prejudiced against applicants who are gay or involved in an unmarried sexual relationship. We sought a loving response through discussion and silent worship, extending over many months. We came to understand that our voice would be strongest when joined with others in our Quarter and beyond. We drafted a Minute that we shared with Quarterly Meeting in December, and that continues to be seasoned and refined. Through this process we came to a deeper appreciation of Quaker process. As we stated in our Minute, we seek “to see what it is that love can do.”

Meeting for Worship continues to be a powerful experience, nourishing us both in silence and in our spoken ministry. We continue to find the Healing Circle a meaningful time to hold people in the Light, and twice a month before worship we sing using our new hymnals.

During the year we gathered for several effective Quaker Quest sessions, Friendly Forums, Men’s Group, and Women’s Group, Celebration of Life, a Kingsland Bay picnic, Friendly Eights, and potlucks. A special gathering to explore the practice of holding people in the Light provided wonderful opportunities for spiritual inquiry and fellowship. We appreciate our ongoing sharing by way of the listserv and newsletter.

2010 saw the death of our beloved Friend, Burt Knopp, whose long, luminous life we carry with us in wonderful memories of him and of Quaker gatherings at the home he shared with Honey. We welcomed Eliza Putnam who was born in early summer

Throughout the year we supported each other in clearness committees, two Friend’s work in Mongolia, in the home of the new baby, in the political campaign of a Meeting

cont.

member, at a recommitment ceremony, and in struggles related to family illness and death. We supported the wider Middlebury community by our participation in Community Suppers, First Day School making more Healing Hand Balm for H.O.P.E., and in offering aid to Mexican farm workers.

Financially we are in solid standing. This year we reassessed the donations we give to community and Quaker concerns. We feel grateful that without ownership of a building we are in a position to be more generous in this regard. We still seek to work with Havurah to improve the acoustics and energy efficiency of the building.

We hosted Quarterly Meeting in December. Although the gathering was well attended and successful, the process of organizing the event exposed weaknesses in our current committee structure that can guide us to clarify responsibilities and lines of communication in the future.

There were instances where a disproportionate level of work or responsibilities fell on few shoulders, and we realize this is not sustainable. We realize that we are not meeting the needs of families and young people and are exploring ways we can join cooperatively with local Unitarians for the benefit of our younger Friends. We recognize the need to be more conscientious of the needs of our elders. Looking to the new year, we hope to address these issues, to reach out more to the two worship groups (Ticonderoga and Wake Robin) that are in our care, and, in the words of Honey Knopp, “to help each other up with a tender hand.”

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Editor: Winslow Colwell

Newsletter Mailing: Ted Colwell & Ruth Barenbaum

Co-Clerks

Stewart Kirkaldy (388-3388)

Jean Rosenberg (388-6453)

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Laura Asermily

266 Washington St. Ext.

Middlebury, VT 05753

388-9478

Co-Treasurer

Jill Stackhouse

12 Seminary St

Middlebury, VT 05753

388-9224

Pastoral Care Committee

Caring for one another in a loving community is an important part of our life as a Meeting.

Call any member of Pastoral Care to share a concern or need.

Priscilla Baker (388-8024)

Sas Carey (388-1301)

Grace McGrath (388-6576)

Ruth Barenbaum (388-2651)

Brud Leedom (623-7533)

Carrie Reed (388-0436)

We welcome your submissions! — win@wcolwell.com

MIDDLEBURY FRIENDS MEETING
PO Box 1026
Middlebury, VT 05753

Meeting for Worship
10 AM every First Day
Havarah House, 56 N. Pleasant St. (Rt.7), Middlebury

www.middleburyquakers.org

Please send newsletter submissions to
the address above or to win@wcolwell.com